Construction of NHs in Jharkhand

†2569. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Jharkhand have sent any scheme or proposal to Central Government for construction of different roads of the National Highways passing through the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 16 proposals amounting to Rs. 6428.97 lakh have been received till date from State Government of Jharkhand for National Highways under Annual Plan 2007-08. Details of proposals is given in table below:

Category	Number of proposals	Amount (Rs. in lakh)
Culverts	6	396.88
IRQP	3	1270.64
Widening to 2-lane	2	1377.65
Strengthening	2	932.39
Road Over Bridge (R.O.B.)	2	2431.37
Road Safety	1	20.04
TOTAL:	16	6428.97

(c) Keeping in view sanctions already issued in earlier years for NHs in Jharkhand, sanction ceiling for works on NHs in Jharkhand during 2007-08 is Rs. 46.00 crore. During current year 2007-08, three works amounting to Rs. l.09 crore have been sanctioned and other works are in different stages of examination for sanction. One of these works for ROB at Namkum on NH-33 amounting to Rs. 26.30 crore with Ministry's share of Rs. 18.69 crore has already been cleared by Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) on 20.08.2007.

High toll charges

2570. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Road Safety Forum represented to Government to review the system of high tollage charges for using the National Highway system;

(b) the reasons citied by the Road Safety Forum for removal or reduction of toll chages;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether it is a fact that the NHAI is exploiting innocent people in Andhra Pradesh by extracting high tolls;

(d) the steps Government would take to reduce the toll charges on NH-5 in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) the steps proposed to reduce burden on the public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Dr. P. Pulla Rao, President Road Safety Forum represented that toll charges being levied by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) have no rational basis. According to him, the toll rates are very high. He wants to know the reasons for high toll rates, and so many toll gates.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. It is not a fact that NHAI is exploiting the innocent people. The toll charges are as per approved policy of Government.

Cost of constructing NHs

2571. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the costs of road construction per mile on the National Highway system are one of the highest in the world;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Road Safety Forum has suggested more competition by making the contract distances smaller;

(c) whether it is a fact that a monopoly and coordinated tendering has emerged on the bidding for contracts in the National Highway system;

(d) whether Government would carefully consider the suggestions of the Road Safety Forum to increase genuine competition among the road contractors; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) 4-laning projects on National Highways are awarded on the basis of international competitive bidding and no such comparative figures are readily available.

(b) Information is being collected.

(c) No such case has been reported.

(d) There is already genuine competition among road contractors because of the competitive bidding.

(e) Does not arise.